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1 THE ORDEAL

Photoplay in five reels

3 Adapted by Beulah Marie Dix
2 from the story by Somerset Maugham

4 Directed by Paul Powell

✓ Author of the photoplay (under Sec. 62) ✓
Famous Players-Lasky Corporation of U. S.

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Publicity

THE ORDEAL

Original by
Somerset Maugham

Adapted by
Beulah Marie Dix

Directed by

Paul Small

Sybil Grayshaw, an orphan girl of good family and no fortune, has dependent upon her a younger brother, Geoffrey, and a younger sister, Helen, who is a cripple. In order to provide a home for them, she marries George Bruce, who is twenty years her senior, and, as she discovers after their marriage, a dissipated cad.

To get Sybil out of the way, so that he may take his pleasures unchecked, Bruce sends her, with her brother and sister, to his mountain camp to spend the summer. Her only attendant is a middle-aged negress, Minnie, who has been nurse to all three of the young Grayshaws and is devoted to them.

At the camp the nearest neighbor is a young physician, Dr. Robert Acton, who has a little summer place three miles up the lake. He is called in to attend Helen, and becomes the friend of the entire family. Quite unknown to herself, Sybil becomes deeply attached to him.

On one of Bruce's infrequent visits to the camp, a sudden furious storm arises, while Acton and Geoffrey are out on the lake in a canoe. Sybil's agitation when Geoffrey returns alone, and her delight when Acton appears a moment later, convince Bruce that she is having an affair with Acton. He orders Acton out of the house, and as soon as Acton is gone, practically charges

Sybil with infidelity. Geoffrey, who is a mere lad, leaps to his sister's defense. Bruce beats him up and bids him go after Acton. To Sybil's protests he merely answers:

"Do you want to go with him, and take your crippled sister with you?"

Sybil is helpless. She knows that she is incapable of taking care of her invalid sister. For Helen's sake, she has to put up with Bruce.

A fortnight or so later, Bruce pays another visit to the camp, and exultingly shows Sybil a will that he has just had drawn up, under which, upon his death, she will inherit all his large estate but will forfeit it to charity, should she marry again. He tells her he has done this deliberately - she can have the money she is dying to squander, or she can have the man she's crazy after - a hell of a choice, and that's the hell he means to leave her.

Bruce, coming the "big brother" act, presses his odious attentions upon the shrinking Helen, and is only driven off by the timely entrance of Minnie, who surprises him in the act.

Sybil masters her resentment against Bruce, and asks him for the money to take Helen to a surgeon in Paris, who may perhaps be able to cure her. Bruce laughs at the project, but mellowed by a mint julep which Minnie brings him, at his request, he ends by telling Sybil that she can have the money for this wild goose chase "provided Little Sister comes off her high horse and is nice to him." Slowly Sybil grasps his hideous suggestion - when she does, she denounces him furiously as a filthy beast. Beside himself with rage, he tries to seize her. She eludes him. He turns to the desk, where he has locked up his will, and shouting to her

that he will destroy it and make another will that shall leave her penniless, starts to open the desk. The lock is stiff. He completely loses his temper and smashes in the lid with a chair. He is in the act of tearing up the will, when he is seized with one of the heart attacks to which he is subject, brought on by his rage and exertions. He shrieks to Sybil to bring him digitalis, which alone can save him in these seizures. She takes the vial from a cupboard, pours a few drops into the melted ice at the bottom of the julep glass, and is about to give him the dose, when the thought of his leathsome proposal in regard to little Helen recurs to her. Almost involuntarily she lets glass and vial fall and shatter on the floor. Then in horror at what she has done, she starts to flee from the room. On the threshold she meets Minnie, just entering. While Sybil frantically prays, Minnie goes to Bruce's side, and reports him "dead as wicked Pharaoh, and 'tain't for us to question de will of Gaud." Minnie carefully removes the pieces of the vial and the glass. Sybil falls on her knees beside the dead man, conscience stricken, but then she thinks of Helen, and she sees the will, that insures her a fortune to care for the younger girl and educate her brother. She takes up the will, and holds it to her breast, while she faces the dead man, defiantly.

Sybil now has a fortune, but she loses two friends from her life. Astor recedes, and she has to believe in the diagnosis of Geoffrey and Helen that he is "too proud to stay friends with a rich young widow, since he hasn't a million of his own." Minnie, too, tells her that they must part company, and Sybil dares not

question her. She feels that the negress suspects the truth of what happened in the hour of Bruce's death and silently holds her to be her husband's murderess.

Sybil sends Geoffrey to college and goes abroad with Helen. After a lapse of two years we see the little family again. Helen is now entirely cured, pretty, wilful, and altogether spoiled, a typical up-to-date flapper. Geoffrey, with no need to work or plan for a career, has become a fast young man, who accepts expulsion from his college as a joke. Sybil herself has acquired poise - has grown from a girl into a woman - but in the process has hardened just a bit. However, she is sufficiently the old Sybil to be terribly upset when she takes up a paper and sees the announcement of the engagement of Dr. Robert Acton and a young society woman.

Only a day later, in a florist's shop, Sybil meets Acton accidentally, after all the years, and upon congratulating him, learns that the Dr. Acton of the engagement notice is his cousin. Her relief at this news is apparent. Really in her heart she loves Acton and has always loved him. She asks him now to call and he agrees to without enthusiasm. The "too proud to be friends with a rich young widow" theory is not altogether wrong - especially as he knows he would not be content to remain just a friend. But on that same day, from the Sunday gossip of a sensational paper that he finds in the hands of a little patient, Acton learns the story of Bruce's spite will. The moment he realizes that the man who wooed Sybil cannot be accused of fortune hunting, he resolves to renew their acquaintance.

Through the weeks that follow Helen and Geoffrey are making sinister connections. Unknown to Sybil, Helen is much of the time with a self styled "Madam St. Lewis," whom she met on the steamer, and Madam's brother, "Baron St. Lewis" (known to the underworld as "Gentleman Gene") who is a wonderful dancer and with whom the foolish flapper falls in love. Geoffrey meantime is spending his sister's money on chorus girls.

Sybil, unaware of what is going on in her household, is happy in her renewed friendship with Acton. One day, when they are taking tea together in her drawing room, her filmy sleeve catches fire from the alcohol lamp. Acton quickly puts out the fire, before the arm is scorched, but the sense that he might have lost her - the fact that he has her in his arms - move him to declare his love and beg her to marry him. He points out that Helen now is cured and Geoffrey a young man, who ought to fend for himself. Sybil does not need the fortune for their sakes. He urges her to let the money go and take the portion of love that is her birthright. She tells him that he will know by the dress she wears that night at a dinner where they both are going, whether she intends to become the wife of a brilliant young surgeon or remain the mistress of millions.

Sybil fully means to relinquish the fortune and marry Acton, whom she deeply loves. So she arrays herself for the dinner in a simple gown. (Of course there is no question of Sybil's descending to poverty when she marries Acton, but the difference between an independent fortune and a husband with an income of \$25,000 a year means quite a change in the gowns worn.) Helen

comes in and criticises the "dowdy rag" that Sybil is wearing - then she displays the costly fur coat that she has on and airily says that she has had it charged to Sybil. Sybil explains to her that she will have to give up buying everything she fancies, for she plans to marry again, and in that case they will be comparatively poor. Helen immediately goes into violent hysterics, which deceive Sybil, but not her maid, Elise, who is devoted to her and has Helen's number. While Sybil is hanging over Helen, the butler brings word that Geoffrey wishes to speak with her at once. Sybil goes to his room, with injunctions to Elise to be very gentle with Helen.

Geoffrey asks Sybil for \$25,000. She refuses to give him such a sum. He then pulls a fake attempt at suicide which completely subjugates her. Regretfully, knowing that she must give up Astor if she is to keep the fortune and make her brother and sister happy, Sybil gives Geoffrey a check for the sum he demands and takes away the revolver with which he has threatened to kill himself. She returns to her room, where she puts away the revolver, and there she finds Helen dripping and weeping, after the dose of cold water which the unsympathetic Elise has administered to her. Sybil assures Helen that she need not cry - she shall have all the pretty things she wants, for she will never marry now. Regretfully she takes off the "dowdy rag" in which she had hoped so happily to give Astor the answer: yes.

Sybil appears in her hostess's drawing room that evening in a stunning toilet that attracts every eye. Among the new admirers that flock round her is Sir Francis Maynard, an Englishman of forty, a traveler and explorer, and a thoroughly delightful personality. Astor manages to get a word alone with Sybil. She

tells him that for the sake of her brother and sister she must give up all thought of marriage. Heartbroken, he tells her that Helen and Geoffrey need to be made to stand on their own feet - and warns her that she is spoiling them, for the sake of keeping the luxuries that secretly she desires. He turns from her, and she turns for comfort to Maynard who is near her.

"There are so many things," she says involuntarily, "that she wants to forget."

"People play the game of forgetting, like other games, best when they have a partner," he assures her.

His words may mean much or little. As a matter of fact Sybil and Maynard pal together a good deal in the weeks that follow. Sybil is miserable and seeks to forget her misery in pleasure, and Maynard is a delightful companion. But no physique can keep the pace of pleasure indefinitely. One day in early spring Sybil is glad to motor out with Maynard to the quiet but questionable Bussy Tavern, for a simple cup of tea between two nights of dancing and drinking. At the tavern, in the women's cloak room, she finds Winnie in attendance, and the negress assures her that this house is "no fit place for you."

Over the tea cups Maynard tells Sybil that he loves her. She confesses simply that she is tired of gay parties - one can't forget that way. She will be glad to marry him. Haltingly he lets her know that marriage is impossible - he has a wife in England, from whom he has been long estranged, who will never divorce him. But he points out to Sybil the advantage of love

without marriage - under such circumstances she can keep the fortune and continue to care for Geoffrey and Helen. Sybil, who is a gentle, decent sort, in spite of her pathetic little fling at dissipation, is shocked into common sense by the proposal that he makes so simply. She breaks into tears - he apologizes abjectly. (He is not at all a villain.) She tells him that she does not blame him - no wonder he thought her that sort. She hurries away to the cloak room to dry her eyes and don her wraps, and there she remembers with relief that she still has Geoffrey and Helen and that henceforth she will give up pleasure and live just for them.

Contrary to custom, Sybil goes home early that night, sadly shaken by what the day has brought her. She finds a note from Helen, saying that she is spending the night with friends, who are also friends of Sybil's. As a matter of fact, at that moment, Helen, flushed with wine, is starting out in a limousine with Madam St. Levis and the "Baren" and their destination is the Bussy Tavern.

Sybil goes up to her room and entering softly sees by the shadow on the wall that a man is in her dressing room, rifling the little safe that holds her jewels. She presses the electric button that will bring Elise, then softly takes from a drawer the pistol that she wrested from Geoffrey. When the burglar starts to leave the dressing room, with his pockets crammed with her jewels, she confronts him with the pistol, switches on the lights - and finds herself face to face with Geoffrey himself. At that moment Elise enters. Sybil almost collapses with dismay. Elise

orders Geoffrey to put back the jewels or she will rouse the household and call in the police. Geoffrey sullenly hands them over while he mutters to Sybil:

"See what your stinginess has driven me to!"

Sybil insists on giving him back the jewels. She never wants to see them again. Geoffrey takes them ungraciously, saying these are the last things she'll ever have the chance to give him - he's clearing out at once. He flings out of the room, and Sybil, who sees her idol shattered, collapses. Unable to revive her at once, Elise runs to the telephone, snatches up Sybil's little private address book, sees Dr. Robert Acton's name first on the list, and unknown to Sybil calls him up and begs him come at once to the house.

Acton comes, and heart-broken, wretched, Sybil gives way when she sees again the only man she loves, and clings to him desperately. He tells her that he still loves her and begs her to marry him. She hesitates - longs to have the comfort of his presence always - thinks of Helen who needs her money - thinks a little too of the lovely things she has herself now got used to. Then Maynard's cynical proposal comes into her head, and not quite herself with the day's shocks, she suggests to Acton that she might keep the fortune - and yet be loved. He looks her over:

"So that is what the money has made of you!"

He rises to go. She realizes what she has done and clings to him, repeating that she didn't know what she said - he must forgive her. He is set to go - he understands better than she herself how far she has deteriorated since the days in camp. He

is just about to leave her and for good when the telephone rings. Sybil implores him to wait - runs to the phone - and gets an agitated message from Minnie, in the cloak room at Bussy Tavern, to "come right out for Miss Helen is here with the devil's own." Afraid of discovery Minnie then hangs up. Sybil turns frantically to Aston:

"You can't leave me now!"

He assures her he'll stand by her. At that moment Geoffrey bursts into the room. He has listened in at the telephone in his own room and realized that Helen, to whom he is devoted, is in peril. All that has passed between them this evening is forgotten by Sybil and Geoffrey - their one thought is Helen - she bids him hurry and get out the roadster while she makes ready for the drive to Bussy Tavern.

Meantime Madam St. Levin has brought Helen into the cloak room. The girl is three quarters intoxicated. Madam tells her to pull herself together for no minister will marry her to the Baron while she is in this condition. Minnie realizes now the aim of the two conspirators and realizes that there is no time to lose. She overpowers Madam by strategy and locks her in a closet. Then she seizes Helen by the hand and flees with her out of the house, while "Gentleman Gene" is knocking angrily on the door of the cloak room.

Sybil, Aston, Geoffrey, and their chauffeur start on a record-breaking run thru the night to Bussy Tavern.

Knowing that pursuers will come close on her tracks, Minnie, the descendant of hunted slaves, doubles cannily and takes refuge with the half unconscious Helen in a disused garage in the very shadow of Bussy Tavern. There she is at last

tracked out by Gene and some of the men servants of the establishment. They force the door, but as they enter, Minnie uncovers the flame of the lantern she has lit in the garage, and holding it over an open can of gasoline threatens to send them all up in a "blazing glory" if they go to lay hand on her "I'll Missy." One of the men at that threat turns tail and runs. He stumbles out into the court of the Bussy Tavern, just as Sybil, blown and breathless, arrives in her car. The man's shout to his companions:

"You don't get me within ten miles of that old nigger woman!" is enough to convince Sybil that Minnie is in the garage and Helen must be with her. Sybil and her friends rush into the garage. Gene is bundled out, in the chauffeur's grasp, after Geoffrey has tried to beat him up, and been pulled off by Aston. Sybil hangs over Helen, and in terror at the state in which she finds her, calls Aston back, as he is about to leave the little family together.

"Is she drugged?" she asks him.

He shakes his head.

"No, poor child... she's drunk!"

Sybil breaks into hysterical laughter. This is justice, she says. The money has made her brother into a thief and her sister into - what she dares not say. And she gave her soul to get that money, in order to help them. Yes, she means it. She gave her soul - for she destroyed the vial of digitalis that meant life to her husband - she murdered him.

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Aston tells her that it makes no difference what she thinks she did. He loves and he wants to marry her. But Sybil refuses. She will let the money that has ruined her and hers go to charity, as it would have gone if she had married again, and she and Geoffrey will take Helen and go away and begin afresh. Geoffrey accedes to this. The thought of Helen's peril has at last shocked him into sanity and the beginnings of decency.

Sybil is taking leave of Aston - for good, as she steadily and sincerely tells him - when Minnie, after a moment of silent prayer, steps forward. She tells Sybil that she is NOT responsible for Bruce's death - that she, Minnie, is the guilty one. When she saw, that last day in camp, what Bruce had in his heart toward little lame Helen, she went for advice to her Bible. She opened it at a passage that denounced judgment upon the wicked. Simple and devout, the black woman deemed that her warrant to remove Bruce. She placed rat poison in the julep she was mixing at his request and he drank it at a gulp.

"There wa'n't medicine enough in the world to save him," she tells Sybil, "when you let that bottle of digitalis fall from your poor little frightened hands."

Sybil looks up, like one relieved from death. Minnie asks Aston if he feels to give her over to the police. He shakes his head. She says after what's done she can't never have part with them, and silently goes her way. But she leaves her beloved children with their faces turned toward possible happiness - Geoffrey with his arms about poor little unconscious Helen - and Sybil in the embrace of the man who loves her and whom she loves.

The End.

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MAY -2 1922

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I herewith respectfully request the return of the following named motion picture films deposited by me for registration of copyright in the name of
Famous Players-Lasky Corporation

THE ORDEAL (5 reels)

Respectfully,

FULTON BRYLAWSKI

The Famous Players-Lasky Corporation hereby acknowledges the receipt of two copies each of the motion picture films deposited and registered in the Copyright Office as follows:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Date of Deposit</u>	<u>Registration</u>
THE ORDEAL	5/2/22	L: ©CIL 17817

10 Copies Returned
MAY 5 1922
Delivered in person.

The return of the above copies was requested by the said company, by its agent and attorney, on the 2d day of April, 1922 and the said Fulton Brylawski for himself and as the duly authorized agent and attorney of the said company, hereby acknowledges the delivery to him of said copies and the receipt thereof.

MAY -5 1922

★ O. K. - F. G. ★

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